



---

## **PRESS RELEASE**

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 24, 2004**

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
HARRIET BERNICK  
Telephone: (602) 514-7736  
Pager: (602) 356-0004

### **MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE FOR RAPE AND MURDER OF MISSING WOMAN**

**PHOENIX, ARIZ.** – The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced that on May 24, 2004, Irvin Cepi, 6/1/80, of Jeddito, Arizona, was sentenced to life imprisonment on each of seven separate counts, by United States District Judge Robert C. Broomfield, in Phoenix, Ariz.

The evidence at trial showed that on May 18, 2002, Irvin Cepi and three other men picked up Charlotte Jane Brown while she was hitchhiking close to her home in Steamboat, Arizona, on the Navajo Reservation. Charlotte Brown was driven to a remote location where she was restrained and forcibly raped by Irvin Cepi and each of the three other assailants. Following the rape, Charlotte Brown was forced back into the car and driven a few miles away, to yet another remote location in the woods northeast of Jeddito, Arizona. As they drove to the second location, Irvin Cepi and the others plotted to kill Charlotte Brown in order to prevent her from reporting them for the rape. Irvin Cepi killed Charlotte Brown by smashing a large rock upon the right side of her head while she pleaded with him for her life. After she had been killed, Irvin Cepi concealed Charlotte Brown's body under some rocks in a nearby wash. Charlotte Brown's partial

(MORE)

remains, scattered and scavenged by predators, were not discovered until August 26, 2002. In the intervening months, Charlotte Brown's family had extensively posted "missing person" flyers in the area.

Irvin Cepi had been found guilty by jury on February 20, 2004, of the following seven counts: First Degree Murder, Felony Murder in the Course of Kidnapping, Kidnapping, Felony Murder in the Course of Aggravated Sexual Abuse, Aggravated Sexual Abuse, Sexual Abuse Resulting in Death, and Conspiracy to Commit First Degree Murder.

The sentencing was attended by many of Charlotte Brown's ten siblings, her mother, and other relatives, several of whom addressed the Court regarding the impact of the disappearance and death of Charlotte Brown.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement Services.

The prosecution was handled by Soo C. Song, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-355-PCT-RCB  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-101

# # #